

NHSC SiteLink

sitelink@matthewsgroup.com



Uniting Communities in Need
With Clinicians Who Care

Dear NHSC Friends:

Here is something that we can be excited about! Having access and sharing information on the successes of sites and communities can help all of us improve health care services. This is the power of data! Read more on the Uniform Data System, the vehicle that allows us to capture essential data to document the ways that we together can improve the health of the Nation's underserved.

As always, we want to hear from you. E-mail your feedback to us at sitelink@matthewsgroup.com.

The UDS Is an Invaluable Tool

The Uniformed Data System (UDS) is the means by which the Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC) captures program performance data and provides an accurate picture of the impact BPHC and its partners have on improving and expanding access to health care for the Nation's underserved. Implemented in 1996 by the BPHC, the UDS has proven to be an invaluable tool. So much so that in 1998 the Bureau expanded the UDS to encourage participation by sites that have an NHSC-supported clinician on staff, even when not receiving grant support from BPHC.

Lessons Learned

The data collected through UDS and its subsequent analysis have provided us with hard evidence of what we already knew: The NHSC and its network of partners is an essential component of the Nation's health care safety net. This is what Mary Lou Weber, controller of North Florida Pediatrics and executive director of the Florida Association of Rural Health Clinics, says: *"This is the first year that I have had to submit the UDS data, and the numbers will be valuable in talking with local partners as well as State and Federal representatives about the important safety net role that we play in providing essential health care services to vulnerable populations."*

In 1999, we learned that:

- Approximately 3.6 million people received care from an NHSC clinician.
- 79 percent of the people who received care from an NHSC-sponsored clinician were at or below 200 percent of the National poverty level.
- 30 percent of the people were Medicaid patients, 40 percent were Medicare patients, and 30 percent were uninsured.
- NHSC and BPHC grant-supported sites together serve 25 percent of the Nation's underserved.

Day-to-Day Benefits

Sites that have participated in the NHSC UDS reporting process have found that it has had a positive impact on their day-to-day operations. For example, Joanie Perkins, practice manager at St. Vincent/Randolph County Hospital and Health Services in Winchester, Indiana, says... *"This reporting does assist us when talking with our State and Federal legislators about the service we provide, the people that we serve, as well as the amount of care that we deliver through our very affordable discount fee schedule to low-income populations that lack health insurance coverage."*

What Sites Need to Know About UDS...

- NHSC sites need to submit UDS reports for the previous year by February 15.
- If you have not submitted a UDS report for 2000, you are encouraged to do so now.
- Sites that are grantees of programs administered by BPHC need to submit only the standard UDS.
- Sites that have an NHSC-obligated clinician on staff but are not grantees need to submit only the condensed NHSC UDS.

UDS Training and Resources

The implementation of the NHSC UDS is supported by an extensive training program. Please call the UDS support line at 1-888-459-1080 or contact the appropriate HRSA Field Office. For information on the NHSC UDS, including instructions to request software and complete tables, visit: http://www.bphc.hrsa.gov/nhsc/pages/community_assistance/c_a_uds.htm on the NHSC Web site. For more information on the Web about the standard UDS, go to <http://www.bphc.hrsa.gov/uds>.

Did You Know?

The NHSC Recruitment and Retention Assistance Application is available year-round for multi-year assistance. Don't wait to submit your new requests for assistance in meeting your community needs. The Policy Information Notice 2001-15 provides you with more information, including the recruitment and retention application. To obtain the document, go to <http://access.gov/file/area40/2001-15A.PDF>, or call 1-800-221-9393 for a copy.

